



Reserve legal team LENDs DIRECT SUPPORT To The Fleet

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NAS NORTH ISLAND, Calif. – LN1 Susan Wells has been in the Navy Reserve since 1995, when she joined after four years on active duty. Even though the Texas native lives and drills in the Navy-rich San Diego area, she had never been aboard a ship.

Until now that is. This spring she was not only aboard, she was helping to raise the readiness level of one of the Navy's most valuable assets – the aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74).

Wells and her fellow Reservists from Naval Reserve Legal Services Office (NRLSO) Detachments (Det.) 119 and 219, both based in San Diego, spent a Thursday and Friday aboard Stennis helping the ship's company create wills, powers of attorney and other legal documents. The legal readiness days were also open to Sailors from Carrier Air Wing 14; USS Nimitz (CVN 68), which was moored next to Stennis at NAS North Island; and related commands.

"Even if it's just for a couple of days, it helps to get aboard and

see that side of the Navy," said Wells.

While Wells was getting a taste of shipboard life, her active-duty counterparts were getting any needed legal concerns addressed before going on deployment.

For CS3 Jennifer Pifer, a Stennis crewmember, that meant creating a will and power of attorney document.

Pifer has been in the Navy for five years, but stated she never thought much about a will until she and her husband had their first child – a son – a few months ago.

"Having a child makes you think a little more seriously about what you are doing, what you need to take care of," Pifer said.

"It's a personal readiness issue," said LCDR Robert J. Hunt, command Judge Advocate General (JAG) aboard the Stennis.

"From the Navy's perspective, we want Sailors who are ready to go, ready to fight their ship. If you are being distracted with legal issues at home, people can't concentrate on their job."

"From a personal perspective, life is just a lot easier if you have the peace of mind knowing that things are taken care of back home," Hunt said.

While Hunt's department on Stennis – himself, another JAG